(e) and (f) The economic development of backward regions is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned and is part of the larger developmental strategy and programmes. These aspects are taken care of by the State Governments while formulating their plans.

508. [*Transferred to the 3rd January* 1991]

Revitalisation of Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd.

509. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared any plan for the revitalisation of the Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) to (c) The working of Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Limited, Durgapur is being regularly monitored by Government and steps are taken for effecting improvement in its performance. This includes upgradation of the existing technology.

Use of alcohol as petroleum substitute

510. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission had made Plan panel exercises during 1979 for promoting use of alcohol using agricultural surpluses as a substitute of petroleum;

(b) if so, in view of the Gulf crisis and increase in crude price whether the Planning Commission would rework these exercises in the present scenario; and

(c) whether any serious study has been carried out on the possibilities of liquification of coal as a substitute for crude oil using German or South African Technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) The Planning Commission had set up a Working Group on Energy Policy in December, 1977 whose Report was received in November, 1979. The Working Group had recommended that the possibilities of introducing producer gas powered vehicles and the use of alcohol to substitute petrol/diesel should be studied and necessary efforts should be initiated in this direction at the earliest. An inter-Ministerial Committee set up by the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals explored the possibilities of using alcohol as motor fuel in transport sector. The Report of the Committee was submitted in July, 1989. The Committee opined that surplus alcohol was not available on a sustained basis in this country for use as motor fuel and it should be used only for producing value added chemicals.

(b) In the context of present Gulf crisis, a Steering Committee has been constituted by the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals to examine the inter-fuel substitution possibilities of Ethanol, Methanol, CNG and LPG and to evaluate the options, considering their opportunity cost and techno-economic viability, for total/partial replacement of diesel/petrol.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Central Fuel Reseach Institute has been carrying out research and development work on the conversion of coal to liquid fuels for the last two decades.

CBI investigation into corruption case against retired army officer

511. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the daily "Business & Political Observer" New Delhi, dated 28-11-90 captioned "CBI, army at Loggerheads" on the reported indifference of Army officials to let CBI investigate a corruption case against Major General A. K. Gupta (Retired);

(b) whether it is a fact that the CBI has located the officer who had escaped military custody near Cuddapah railway station while being brought from Madras to Ahmednagar, for trial by a General Court Martial;

(c) if so, whether the CBI is awaiting the army to finish the Court Martial; if not, whether CBI would take up the case with the army's assent; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to tackle this matter of serious concern which involves a very high ranking Army official for insider trading, abetting, smuggling and supplying substandard provisions at high rates to the IPKF in Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI LALIT VIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No Sir. The accused was arrested by the Andhra Pradesh Police.

(c) and (d) A General Court Martial is now time-barred under the provisions of the Army Act. However, all possible steps are being taken by the CBI to investigate the case. The Army authorities are extending their fullest cooperation in the on-going investigation.

Meeting of Inter-State Council

512. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a meeting of the Inter-State Council took place at New Delhi on 10th October, 1990:

(b) if so, the details of the participants;

(c) whether it was convened to discuss the Centre-State relations in the light of the recommendations made by the Sarkaria Commission;

(d) if so, what were the main topics that were discussed at the meeting; and

(e) decisions taken at this meeting?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A list of participants is enclosed as statement. (*See* below)

(c) Discussion on the report of the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations, was one of the items on the Agenda.

(d) In the meeting the report of the Sarkaira Commission on Centre-State relations **was taken up for discussion** and the members were requested to give their views on the commission's recommendations.

(e) It was decided that a Sub-Committee of the Inter-State Council may be constituted to examine the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations and give its concrete suggestions thereon and to consider wider aspects of Central State relations.

Statement

1st Meeting of the Inter-State Council held on 10.10.1990 at New Delhi

List of Members present/attended the meeting

1. Shri V. P. Singh *Chairman*
   The Prime Minister
2. Prof Madhu Dandavate
   Minister of Finance
3. Shri Mufti Mohammed Sayeed
   Minister of Home Affairs
4. Shri Ajit Singh
   Minister of Industry
5. Shri I. K. Gujral
   Minister of External Affairs
6. Shri P. Upendra
   Minister of Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs

Shri Subodh Kant Sahay, Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, and Shri Anil Shastri, Dy. Minister in the Ministry of Finance also attended the meeting.